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SALVATION by GRACE,

BUT

Not without HOLINESS

IN

HEART and LIFE.

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL PIKE,
containing some Remarks on his Dis-
course, entitled, *Free Grace indeed!*

By JOHN GREENE.

No Faith truly Justifies, but that which Sanctifies:
Epistolary Correspondence, Page 46.

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Reverend Sir,

THERE are, as you have well observed, 'two Extremes which we cannot be too careful to guard against*.' The one is *Self-dependance*; that is, the trusting to our own Works, for Justification and Salvation; and the other is *Self-indulgence*, or the gratifying our carnal Inclinations, having our Conversation in the Lusts of the Flesh, fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh, and of the Mind. And that we may not fall on either of these Rocks,

* Page 87.

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it

it will, I think, be very proper to consider the Gospel as a Doctrine of Grace*, and as the Truth which is after Godliness¶.

The Gospel considered as a Doctrine of Grace, may justly be spoken of as an Enemy to Self-dependance; because it expressly teaches us, that we cannot be justified and saved by the Deeds of the Law†, Works of Righteousness which we have done††; but by the Mercy and Grace of God, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ; that it is in him that we are made accepted, and that through his Blood we have the Forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace‡.

And the Gospel, as the Truth which is after Godliness, may well be considered as an Enemy to Self-indulgence; because it teaches us that denying all Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present World§; and because, to engage us to this, it assures us, that if we live after the Flesh we shall die, and promises Life to those only who through the Spirit, mortify the Deeds of the Body||.

* Acts xx. 24. ¶ Tit. i. † Rom. iii. 20.
 †† Tit. iii. 5. Rom. iii. 24. ‡ Eph. i. 6. 7.
 § Tit. ii. 12. || Rom. viii. 13.

Both these Notions of the Gospel enter into its very Essence, and we may as well not consider it as the Doctrine of God our Saviour, as not consider it as the Word of his Grace, or as the Truth which is after Godliness. Leave out either of these Properties, and you make it another Gospel, very different from that which Christ and his Apostles have taught us.

There is a perfect Harmony between these two Notions of the Gospel; and neither of them is in the least contrary to, or inconsistent with the other. The keeping them both therefore in our Eye, may be a proper Means to prevent our being mistaken as to either. And there must certainly be some mistake or other, when we suppose that the Gospel, as the Doctrine of Grace teaches us, that which is contrary to wholesome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness*. And the same may be said, if we receive that as a Truth of the Gospel which is not agreeable to it, considered as a Doctrine of Grace.

It is very evident that the Apostle had a regard to both these Notions of the Gospel, and that he was concerned not to offend

* 1 Tim. vi. 3:

against either of them. For as he observes, that he did not frustrate the Grace of God, by teaching that Righteousness came by the Law, which in Effect would have been the same as to have asserted that Christ died in vain* ; so he assures us that such was his Doctrine of Justification, and Salvation by Grace, through Faith, that it rather established than made void the Law†.

Thus the Apostle has stated the Truth, ‘ in its native Simplicity and Glory, as it ‘ stands opposed to all Pharisaical Principles ‘ on the one Hand ; and to all Antinomian ‘ Abuses on the other‡.’ And now let us see whether you have followed his Example.

‘ You tell us that the true Grace of God ‘ revealed in the Gospel, is *absolute* and ‘ *immediate*. It is *absolute*, requiring nothing for the helpless Sinner to do, or ‘ endeavour, towards obtaining the divine ‘ Favour : And it is *immediate*, affording ‘ Relief previous to the Exertion of any Act ‘ of ours, and holding forth to the Sinner ‘ such Information, as is sufficient to afford him immediate Hope of Salvation ‘ by Christ.’ And you add, ‘ that unless ‘ the Grace manifested in the Gospel has

* Gal. ii. 21. † Rom. iii. 31. ‡ Page 87.

‘ both

‘ Both these Properties, it cannot be free
‘ indeed*.

And since, as you say, ‘ the Aim of
‘ your Performance centers here, and what
‘ is said concerning every other Subject, is
‘ in order to clear, and vindicate this im-
‘ portant View of divine Grace, and to
‘ shew how all the Doctrines of Grace are
‘ consistent with it, explained by it, drawn
‘ from it, and center in it†.’ I shall con-
sider what you have offered on this Head.

To shew that Grace is *absolute*, you
bring that of the Apostle in Rom. xi. 6.
‘ If by Grace, then it is no more of
‘ Works; otherwise Grace is no more
‘ Grace;’ and to prove that it is *immediate*,
you say, that he directly subjoins, ‘ But if
‘ it be of Works, then it is no more Grace;
‘ otherwise Work is no more Work†.’

But all that is meant by these Words is
this, That Grace and Works cannot both
be the Cause of the same Benefit; if there-
fore it be given on Account of the one, it
cannot be given on Account of the other.
And I freely own, that we owe our Justifi-
cation and eternal Salvation not to our own
Works; but to the Grace of God in Jesus
Christ: and that other Foundation for our

* Preface, p. ii. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

Hopes no Man can lay. In him we have Redemption through his Blood, and as you express it, ' his Work is sufficient to justify, (and I add, to save) Sinners without any of their Concurrence* ;' that is, without their doing any Thing to *merit*, or *purchase* this Blessedness. And it is certain, that there is nothing that God requires us to do to this end, that we may be justified, and saved on Account, or for the Sake of it.

But then it will be proper to observe, that although there is nothing which God requires us to do, that we may *merit*, or *purchase* his Favour, and nothing we can do that will answer this End; yet to speak agreeably to that Doctrine which Christ and his Apostles have taught us, we must say, that there is something we must do as we would secure, and enjoy this Blessing. And this, as we shall see, you your self acknowledge.

Whereas therefore you say, ' How should that Grace be quite free, which leaves the poor Sinner any Thing to do to obtain it† ?' I cannot but suppose, that you thus speak with no other View than to guard your Readers against the fatal Mis-

* Page 39. † Preface, p. ii.

take of thinking to be justified and saved by their own Doings; and that you do not mean to teach us that God's ordaining that all whom he justifies and saves should be found in good Works*, is inconsistent with the Scripture Doctrine of Justification and Salvation, by Grace.

Should I meet with any who thus teach, I should think it very proper to ask, 'Whether a Prince may not be said freely to pardon Rebels, although he insists upon it that all whom he pardons shall lay down their arms, submit to his authority, and behave in time to come as dutiful subjects?' And whether it may not with Reason be said, 'That herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, that we might be justified and saved by him §; although abounding towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence†, and acting becoming the righteous Governor of the World, he insists upon it, that all whom he saves shall yield themselves to him as his Servants, and live in his Service?' For in both these Cases it is not their acting in this manner, but the Mercy and Grace of the Sovereign, that is

* Eph. ii. 10. § 1 John iv. 10: † Eph. xvi. 8.

the Cause of their being thus kindly treated.

But let us consider that which you say 'is
' the other Property of revealed Grace, and
' necessary to render it *free indeed*;' viz.
that 'it is *Immediate*; so that a Person no
' sooner understands and believes it, but he
' is enlightened and relieved thereby; and
' it affords him immediate hope of Salva-
' tion, previous to the Exertion of any Act
' of his; and it becomes a Principle of Ho-
' liness and Consolation to him; being
' taught of God, by the Spirit of Grace
' and Truth *.'

It is with Pleasure I observe, that you
consider revealed Grace understood, and
believed, not only as a principle of Consola-
tion, and as affording immediate hope of
Salvation, but likewise as a *Principle* of
Holiness: And if you will give me Leave
to add, that, considered as a Principle of
Holiness, the Effects which it produces are
also *Immediate*, the difference between us
will not be very considerable, altho' perhaps
we may not agree in all Points.

' If (say you) the View of the Divine
' Righteousness revealed in the Gospel is
' sufficient, and made effectual by the Spirit
' to support the Hope, and so to inflame

‘ the Love, and so to produce experimental
 ‘ and indubitable Effects, what occasion for
 ‘ any thing else in Experience and Practice,
 ‘ to prove a special Interest in Christ, be-
 ‘ sides the Hope, Love, and Obedience,
 ‘ &c. flowing from such a View of Christ
 ‘ and his Grace*.’

And I freely own, that nothing more is necessary. He who sees reason to say, that as he believes in the Lord Jesus, so he loves and obeys him, may be fully satisfied that he shall not be ashamed of his Hope in Him. But this is the very thing for which I here plead; viz. That unless the view of the Divine Righteousness does produce these Effects, it is not sufficient to support our Hope; and that unless we so know Christ, and so believe in him as to love and obey him, we have neither Part nor Lot in him, as a Saviour (for our Heart is not right in the Sight of God); and that unless we have the Evidence of this, we cannot have the hope of Salvation, because we cannot have the Evidence of a Special Interest in the Saviour.

Christ indeed is set before us in the Gospel, and we are to believe in him as the hope of Glory †, the Procurer of Glory, the

* P. 19. † Col. i. 27.

Cause of our expecting and hoping for it. Leave out the Consideration of Christ, and the exceeding Riches of the Grace of God, in his Kindness towards us, through him, and we can have no hope of enjoying this Blessedness. For 'believing in Christ,' as you observe, 'is the Way in which all Spiritual Blessings come to be experienced and enjoyed by us, the Way in which we may arrive at all the Satisfaction and Comfort which we can desire in the present State; for here we are to live by Faith ||.'

But many speak Peace to themselves, to whom God in his Word is thus speaking, 'Behold all ye that kindle a Fire, that compass yourselves about with Sparks; walk in the Light of your Fire, and in the Sparks that ye have kindled: This shall ye have of mine Hand, ye shall lie down in Sorrow *.' They say, Peace and Safety, when sudden Destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape †: They fancy, that Christ being theirs, the Promises are theirs, while alas! the Threatnings of the Word and not the Promises are their Portion; and their Flesh may well tremble for fear of God; for fear of his Judg-

|| P. 69. * Isai. i. 11, † 1 Thes. v. 3.

ments.

ments. This is the melancholly Case of every wicked Man, who comforts himself with the Hope of Salvation. And if there be no Principle of Grace wrought in us, we are certainly among the wicked.

But of all who please themselves with vain Hopes, the Case of none is more deplorable than his, who fancies that he knows, and highly admires the Doctrine of free Grace, and believing in Christ, rejoices in him alone, and has no Confidence in the Flesh, and who upon this blesteth himself in his Heart, saying, ' I shall have Peace, ' though I walk in the Imagination of my ' Heart;' for the Lord will not spare him, but the Anger of the Lord and his Jealousy shall smoke against that Man; and it shall be more tollerable in the Day of Judgment for the vile Inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah than for such a false Believer. What colour of Reason then is there for supposing that he has that Faith which is a Principle of Consolation?

It is a very useful, as well as just Observation, which you have given us in your epistolary Correspondence, viz. ' That no ' Faith truly justifies but that which sanctifies;' by which you mean, ' That whatever Profession a Person makes, or whatever Notions he appears to entertain, yet ' if

‘ if he be not induced thereby to corres-
 ‘ ponding Love and Obedience, there is
 ‘ some defect; Mixture, Mistake, or Re-
 ‘ serve in his Faith which renders it abor-
 ‘ tive†.’ And from this we may infer, that
 the Faith or Believing, which gives an
 immediate Hope of Salvation, must be im-
 mediately working by Love and purifying
 the Heart, so that it may be said of every
 true Believer, ‘ That being made free from
 ‘ Sin, he is become a Servant to God, and
 ‘ begins to have his Fruit unto Holiness§;’
 or to use your own Words, ‘ He is con-
 ‘ cerned to be found in self-denying Obe-
 ‘ dience to Christ’s Commands, as abso-
 ‘ lutely necessary to prove his Faith to be
 ‘ genuine, and the Workings of his Mind
 ‘ to be not delusive§.’ Unless this be his
 real, hearty, fixed concern, it cannot be said
 that he is justified by Faith; and unless con-
 scious of his having this Concern, I see not
 how he can have any true Peace in his Mind,
 well-grounded Consolation, good Hopes of
 being saved.

But you teach us that ‘ the Truth believed
 ‘ does *first* pacify the Conscience towards
 ‘ God; and *then* working by Love, has a
 ‘ purifying Effect on our Souls‡;’ and that

† Page 46. § Rom. vi. 22. § Page 85. ‡ P. 70.
 ‘ when

‘ when a Person sees the Son, and believes
 ‘ on him as freely exhibited in the Gospel,
 ‘ what he sees in Him becomes his Light;
 ‘ that Christ, in whom he believes, becomes
 ‘ his Hope; that his Soul is supported by
 ‘ that on which he trusts and leans; and
 ‘ that he is quickened and attracted by that
 ‘ glorious Gospel which he believes and
 ‘ loves*.’

And if you mean that he who was dead
 in Trespases and Sins is quickened imme-
 diately on, or by his Believing, or that God
 quickens him by his Grace in giving him
 to believe, so that loving Christ, as well as
 loving the Gospel, he is attracted, allured
 and drawn to the Obedience of Him; I
 freely own that being justified by Faith, he
 has Peace with God through our Lord
 Jesus Christ, and that, if conscious of this,
 he has Peace and Comfort in his Soul. But
 I see no Reason to speak of any one as
 justified by a Faith which has not this im-
 mediate Effect upon him. And I cannot
 encourage him to think that being a Be-
 liever, he has good Hope through Grace,
 and so may look for everlasting Consola-
 tion, before he feels the quickening and at-
 tracting influence of the Gospel. Upon this

Plan ‘true Holiness and true Consolation,’ as you speak, ‘keep pace together†; but upon your Plan, Consolation starts first, and then Holiness follows.

It may, indeed, justly be said, that there is a Truth held forth in the Gospel which is very proper to relieve the guilty Conscience; for ‘the Doctrine of Free Grace ‘in Jesus Christ, proclaimed to Sinners as ‘such, is in itself joyful, comfortable, in-
‘courageing, and Soul-pacifying News§.’ It is like a King’s Proclamation of Pardon to all Rebels, without Exception, who will lay down their Arms; for it calls on every wicked and unrighteous Man to forsake his Ways and his Thoughts, and return unto the Lord; assuring him that then he will have Mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon||. And ‘these glad Tidings which it ‘brings are free, and suitable to all; so ‘that no one has a better Right to, or a ‘clearer Interest in them, than another‡.’ Every Sinner, therefore, should consider them with Application to himself; and seeing his own Concern in them, should be saying in his own Heart, ‘Thus the Gospel ‘speaks to me as well as to others.’ And ‘whosoever does not see that the Gospel

† Page 36. § Page 68. || Isai. p. 7. ‡ Page 34.

‘ Report points directly at him, and at his
 ‘ own Case, cannot be said to apprehend
 ‘ the Truth in its proper Light †.’

But then it ought to be observed, that
 neither the King’s Proclamation of Pardon to
 his rebellious Subjects, nor the glad Tid-
 ings of the Gospel, proclaimed to Sinners
 as such, can give true Peace and Comfort
 to any who obstinately persist in their Wick-
 edness.

‘ The turning, pinching Point lies (you
 ‘ say) in this Question; Is it possible for
 ‘ that Truth which has a uniform Aspect
 ‘ towards all Sinners as such, and which is
 ‘ as true concerning those that perish as
 ‘ those that are saved, to give any solid Sa-
 ‘ tisfaction, or to afford solid Hope to any
 ‘ Individual ‡?’ Or, as it was before ex-
 pressed, ‘ How can the Report the Gospel
 ‘ brings to our Ears, when believed, give
 ‘ Peace to the Conscience of any Individual,
 ‘ before he can discern some saving Change
 ‘ in himself, or some Distinction for the bet-
 ‘ ter between himself and another §.’ To
 this Question you answer, that ‘ unless there
 ‘ be a Truth in this, the Gospel cannot be
 ‘ accounted glad Tidings of great Joy to
 ‘ all People; and that the Joy of the Pri-

† Page 31. ‡ Page 33. § Page 29.

‘ mitive Christians, upon their first apprehending and believing the Gospel, would have been without a Foundation *.’

But they who consider the Gospel not only as the Doctrine of the Grace of God, but likewise as the Truth which is after Godliness, must own, that the only Persons to whom it gives solid Hope, solid Satisfaction, are they who so apprehend and believe it as to love and obey it. Thus it was with the Christians you speak of; for they received the Gospel as the Word of God, and not as the Word of Men; and it wrought so effectually on them, that they turned from Idols unto God †, and became Followers of the Churches which were in Christ, as in their Faith, so likewise in their Practice; although it exposed them to great Trials and Sufferings †: And being conscious that their Faith was thus working in them, they had great Reason for rejoicing.

To illustrate this matter, you make use of this Similitude: ‘ If two Persons are under the same Disease, and both of them are told of the same Remedy, he that believes it to be effectual and free, is immediately comforted with Hopes of a Cure, and accordingly applies; while he that sus-

* Page 33. † 1 Thef. i. 9. † Chap. ii. 14.

‘ pects

' pects either the Efficacy or Freeness of it,
 ' receives no Relief to his Mind about it;
 ' and perhaps perishes under the Disease,
 ' though the Remedy was as effectual in its
 ' Nature, and as free in itself, with respect to
 ' his Case, as to the others ||.'

This Similitude is the more proper, because
 Sinners are spoken of in the Gospel as Sick, and
 Christ as the Physician of their Souls, able and
 willing to heal them; but as it is stated, it
 cannot answer your Purpose, for you speak
 of him, who was comforted with Hopes of
 a Cure, as *applying*; and had not this been
 the Effect of his Belief, his Comfort and
 Hopes had been vain and groundless: And
 thus it is as to Sinners, whatever they know,
 and whatever they believe concerning Christ
 Jesus, as a Physician, and the Efficacy and
 Freeness of the Remedies which he pre-
 scribes, they must accordingly apply, or
 their Knowledge and their Faith will do them
 no Service. As for those who resolve to go
 on in their evil Courses, they refuse to be
 healed; and not being willing to come to
 Christ, that they may have Life, they have
 reason to fear that they shall die in their
 Sins.

‘ No Question (you say) is of greater
 ‘ Consequence to our Peace and Comfort,
 ‘ than this, *How shall a Professor come to a*
 ‘ *true Satisfaction about his State towards*
 ‘ *God*?*’ And it is justly observed that
 ‘ the Scriptures give this direct Answer,
 ‘ *By believing and obeying the Gospel;*’ by
 obeying, as well as believing it; one with-
 out the other will not at all avail us. There
 must be the Evidence of both, that we may
 have true Satisfaction. And indeed, there
 is no right believing the Gospel, unless we
 obey it, and no right obeying it, unless we
 believe it.

But many there are who satisfy and please
 themselves with the thoughts of their be-
 lieving the Gospel, while they do not obey
 it. Thus it is for instance with those to
 whom the Word is as Seed sown in stony
 Places. You think that, ‘ according to our
 ‘ Lord’s own Account, the Defect is not
 ‘ the Want of the Exertion of any Act, or
 ‘ the like; but their not understanding the
 ‘ Meaning or Importance of the Word they
 ‘ believe. For the Difference between the
 ‘ Faith of these and of true Believers, is said
 ‘ to consist in this, that the latter hear the
 ‘ Word, and understand it, and therefore

‘ bring forth Fruit; intimating that the
 ‘ others do not understand it. Mat. xiii. 21.
 ‘ 23. †.’ But the principal Design of our
 Lord in the Parable of the Sower is to shew
 us, that whatever Notions we may have of
 the Gospel, and whatever we may believe
 concerning it, we shall fall short of the
 Blessedness it sets before us, unless there
 be an Exertion of our Acts, sincere Obe-
 dience to the Will of God.

It is observed concerning those who
 receive the Seed by the Way-side, which,
 being presently caught away, makes no
 Impression upon them, that ‘ they do
 ‘ not understand it §;’ but there is not
 the least Intimation that it is thus with
 the Hearers you speak of. They indeed,
 who bring forth the Fruit of the Word, are
 said to have understood it; but it cannot
 be inferred from this that others, who were
 impressed by it, did not understand it. And
 as to the grand and fundamental Truth,
 ‘ that Christ is the only and sure Founda-
 ‘ tion of the lost Sinner’s Hope,’ it may
 well be said, that *they* understand that who
 not only believe, but receive it with Joy,
 and consequently ‘ have an Approbation of
 ‘ it, Delight in, and Dependance upon
 ‘ it †.’

† Page 42.

§ Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

The Case of the *Antinomians*, according to the Account you give of it, is in some respect different from that of the Stony ground Hearers. For you do not deny, but rather suppose, that they understand, and believe the Doctrines of free Grace. For you say ‘ That the Defect of their
 ‘ Faith does not lie in a want of Love to,
 ‘ delight in, or Dependance upon what
 ‘ they believe;’ No, ‘ but in their not believing, or not understanding how jealous, as well as how engaging, God appears in the Display of his Love in the
 ‘ Gospel*.’ And this is as much as to say, that they consider the Gospel purely as a Doctrine of Grace, and don’t view it as the Truth which is after Godliness. For, as you add, ‘ If they did, they could
 ‘ have no Satisfaction but in loving and
 ‘ obeying God; and the Opinion of the
 ‘ Apostle *John* concerning such is, that
 ‘ they are liars, and the Truth is not in
 ‘ them, 1 Joh. ii. 4†.’

And thus we ought to think of all who do not bring forth the good Fruit of the Word, whatever be the Cause of their Unfruitfulness, whether it be their not understanding, or ‘ their not believing the

* Ibid. † Ibid.

‘ Truth,

‘ Truth, or their believing a Falsehood, or
 ‘ some Lie connected with the Truth*.’
 And as long as this is the Case, they have
 no Reason to comfort and please them-
 selves with thinking that they are true Be-
 lievers, for not obeying the Gospel of our
 Lord Jesus Christ, they have Reason to
 fear, that when He shall be revealed from
 Heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming
 Fire, he will take Vengeance on them, and
 that they shall be punished with everlasting
 Destruction from the Presence of the Lord
 and from the Glory of his Power†.

But although you have observ’d, that
 according to the Scriptures, we are to come
 to true Satisfaction by obeying as well as
 believing the Gospel, yet you discourage
 us from examining our Hearts and Ways,
 that we may know whether we obey it or
 not. ‘ How (say you) can the Mind be
 ‘ eased, or the Conscience pacified upon
 ‘ *this* Plan? Upon this Plan for obtaining
 ‘ Peace, we must distinguish, divide and
 ‘ subdivide *very nicely*, before we can be
 ‘ supposed to arrive at any Degree of Cer-
 ‘ tainty, by distinguishing what is genuine
 ‘ from what is counterfeit; and after all,
 ‘ most probably, the Matter must remain

* Page 41.

† 2 Thes. i. 7. 9.

‘ in

‘ in doubtful sad suspense ; must not Christianity upon this Plan be a very uncomfortable Thing ; a very uncertain Scheme for Peace and Hope towards God ? * .’

To this it may be sufficient to answer, that Christianity is so pure, so holy a Doctrine, that it calls on none but the Righteous, the upright in Heart, to rejoice in the Lord † ; and is far from speaking Peace to the Wicked ‡. It assures us, indeed, that this is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save even the Chief of Sinners §. And this should in Reason encourage all to put away the Evil of their Doings from before the Eyes of the Lord, ceasing to do Evil, and learning to do Well : But then it declares that there remains nothing but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation, to such as refuse and rebel §. And when these things are so, who sees not that it is our Wisdom carefully and diligently to enquire whether we are righteous or wicked, and to press on after higher Measures and Degrees of Grace and Holiness, that we may have that ‘ Assurance of Hope which

* P. 63, 64, 65. † Ps. xxxiii. 1. ‡ Isai. xlviii. 22. § 1 Tim. i. 15. || Isai. i. 16—20.

‘ arises

‘ arises from Experience in the Hearts of
 ‘ them that love God, and keep his Com-
 ‘ mandments ||.’

‘ But *behold* (say you) in the midst of all
 ‘ these inextricable Perplexities the Gos-
 ‘ pel proclaims the Lord Jesus Christ, and
 ‘ all his Salvation, open and free for the
 ‘ sure Relief and Hope of the distressed and
 ‘ miserable Soul; while every thing else
 ‘ proves uncertain, this is certain. ’Tis
 ‘ found a safe Retreat, a sure Foundation,
 ‘ a sufficient Stay; detached from every
 ‘ other Thought and Consideration §.’

And that we are to behold the Gospel set-
 ting Christ before us as the only and sure
 Foundation for our Hope is freely granted.
 It is absolutely necessary to our Peace and
 Comfort; but then it ought to be observed,
 that we cannot say that he is the Foundation
 of our Hope, as long as we are wicked,
 and not righteous. For he is the Author
 of eternal Salvation to them only that obey
 him †. To them he is a sure Foundation,
 a sufficient Stay; but notwithstanding all
 that Christ has done, the Wrath of God
 cometh ‘ on the Children of Disobedi-
 ‘ ence †.’

|| P. 54. § P. 65. † Heb. v. 9. † Eph. v. 6.

How

How many fancy that resting on the Lord they are safe, while alas, Destruction and Misery are in their Ways ! An Instance of this we have in Mic. iii. 2. ‘ The Heads of the ‘ House of Jacob judge for Reward, the ‘ Priests thereof divine for Money, yet ‘ they lean upon the Lord ; and say, Is not ‘ the Lord among us ? No evil can come ‘ upon us.’ We cannot be at a Certainty that our resting on the Lord is not presumptuous and vain, any farther than we are at a Certainty as to this, ‘ our being his Servants.’

For as has been observed, unless we are the Servants of God, the Threatnings of his Word, and not the Promises are our Portion. ‘ We are,’ indeed, ‘ assured that,’ as you say, ‘ in knowing and obeying the ‘ Gospel we may enjoy everlasting Consolation, and good Hope through Grace* ;’ but there must be the obeying it, as well as the knowing and believing it, or there cannot be this Hope and Consolation.

You speak of this as a grand Objection frequently made and urged against your present View of the Gospel, ‘ How can I ‘ be satisfied unless I am conscious that I ‘ believe *Truly* and *Savingly* ? Must I not

' then by Examination and Proof have it
 ' appear to my Conscience that I am a true
 ' Believer, before I can have any well-
 ' grounded Satisfaction*'? But to shew that
 this is a needless Objection, you assert that
 our having Satisfaction is a Proof of our be-
 ing true Believers. For you tell us that ' we
 ' cannot know that we believe the Gospel,
 ' but by feeling or becoming conscious that
 ' we are comforted, encouraged, or paci-
 ' fied thereby ; that the first Effect of this
 ' Belief must be Peace of Conscience before
 ' God, through the Blood of Christ, and
 ' some Sense of the Divine Favour through
 ' the Righteousness of Christ, proclaimed as
 ' free in the Gospel||; that the Effect produced
 ' in believing it is a peculiar Experience of
 ' Spiritual Peace, Rest, and Refreshment,
 ' and that this peculiar, distinguishing Ex-
 ' perience, is of such a Nature, that it con-
 ' tains or produces, more or less, an expe-
 ' rimental Consciousness of an Interest in,
 ' and Enjoyment of, the blessings compre-
 ' hended in the Declaration of Free Grace §.

You have not told us what you mean by
 a *peculiar* and *distinguishing* Experience of
 Spiritual Peace; but if you speak of that
 Experience, which inflaming the Heart with

* Page 67. || Page 68. § Page 69.

Love to Christ, leads to universal Obedience, I own that it is peculiar to true Believers; and as it shews the Truth of their Faith, so it distinguishes them from all other Persons, and gives them Reason to conclude that their Peace is true and well-grounded. For this is the Character of one who has true Peace, good Hope, through Grace, ‘ He purifieth himself even as Christ is pure†.’

But I see no Reason for your speaking of Peace of Conscience, and a Sense of the Divine Favour as the first Effect of a Belief of the Gospel, and as proving the Truth of our Faith, when, as you own, ‘ there are some true Believers, who are not clearly satisfied of the Safety of their State in Christ*,’ and consequently have not this Peace; and when there are many Unbelievers, who are saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace; many who please themselves with the thoughts that their State is safe, and their everlasting Interests secure; while, alas! the Wrath of God abideth on them. And how can we say that we are not thus mistaken, and do not actually put a Cheat upon ourselves, unless it appears to our Consciences that we are true Believers?

† 1 John iii. 3.

* Page 72.

You speak of a Faith which is *false*, as well as of a Faith which is *true* ||; and surely we may say that a false Faith cannot give us *true* Satisfaction, Peace of Conscience before God, and a Sense of the Enjoyment of the Divine Favour. No, this is peculiar to true Believers; and as ‘the Dominion and Indulgence of Sin proves our Profession to be a lie †;’ so it proves our Faith to be false, and our Peace to be vain and groundless: And as if we say that we have Fellowship with God; so if we say that we have a right Faith, and true Peace, and walk in Darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth §.

A concern to find that in ourselves, which is a Proof of the Truth of our Faith, and distinguishes Believers from Unbelievers, or *true* Believers from those who are *false*, is no other, in effect, than a Concern to find that our Hope in Christ is not Presumption, and that we do not deceive ourselves in thinking that we are among those, who being justified by Faith, have Peace with God, thro’ our Lord Jesus Christ, and reason to rejoice in hope of his Glory.

You say that ‘all the Scripture Exhortations and Promises to Believers, if rightly understood, conspire to support your View

‘ of our Subject* ;’ and that ‘ the Gospel
 ‘ is of such a Nature, that whosoever be-
 ‘ lieveth shall be saved||.’ But please to
 observe, That the Believing, to which in
 the Gospel Salvation is promised, is of such
 a Nature, that whosoever believeth, repents
 of his Sins, and loves and obeys the Lord
 Jesus ; for he himself hath assured us, that
 except we repent, we shall perish¶ ; and
 with his Apostle we may speak of those, not
 as blessed, but accursed, who do not love
 Christ in Sincerity† ; and he who hath his
 Commandments, and keepeth them, he it
 is that loveth him†.

‘ There is (as you observe) no other way
 ‘ of obtaining Satisfaction, but by believing
 ‘ on the Name of Christ, as standing forth
 ‘ to view in the Gospel ; and it is in this
 ‘ Way that God conveys to his People a
 ‘ Sense of his Favour‡‡ :’ But may it not
 also be observed, that they who have Satis-
 faction, and to whom God conveys a Sense
 of his Favour, are his People : They whom
 he fills with Peace and Joy in believing, be-
 ing made free from Sin, are the Servants of
 God, have their Fruit unto Holiness, and
 love and obey the Lord Jesus in Sincerity ;

* Page 71. || Page 39. ¶ Luke xiii. 35.
 † 1 Cor. xvi. 22. † John xiv. 21. ‡‡ P. 75, 76.

being

being born of God, they are new Creatures |||, overcome the World, and all the various Characters the Scriptures give us of true Believers, to distinguish these happy Persons from others, do agree to them; and unless conscious of this, that we come under these Characters, it is not to be thought that we should have true Peace and Satisfaction, because we cannot have any Evidence of our special Interest in Christ, and cannot say that he is in us the Hope of Glory.

It is very proper to warn us against
 ‘ seeking after, or resting upon some false
 ‘ dangerous Prop*,’ and ‘ mixing some
 ‘ Works, or Acts of ours with Christ’s
 ‘ Righteousness in the Matter of our Justi-
 ‘ fication, and taking our Hope of the
 ‘ Divine Favour from a Consciousness of
 ‘ having rightly performed them, instead
 ‘ of receiving it *purely* from the Conside-
 ‘ ration of the Freeness of the Gift†.’ But
 a right Faith in Christ prevents our falling
 on this Rock. For as a true Believer is
 sensible that all have sinned, and come short
 of the Glory of God; so he concludes that
 a Man is justified freely by Grace, without
 the Deeds of the Law, through the Re-

||| 1 John v. 45. * Page 71. † Page 49.

demption which is in Christ, and He claims the Divine Favour, not as due to him on account of his own obedience †, but purely as the Gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Believer indeed sees no way of obtaining or enjoying Peace of Conscience, but by a Reflection upon something found in him, or experienced by him ; but this is very consistent with his looking on Christ as the sole Foundation of Hope. For without finding or experiencing something in himself, as Faith, the Love, Fear of God, &c. he cannot see that he is among those who are justified by Grace, and to whom the Divine Favour is freely given. But to use your own Words, ‘ As these
 ‘ things appear and advance in the Affec-
 ‘ tions and Conduct, the Evidences of a
 ‘ special Interest in Christ are discovered.
 ‘ Not that this Person’s Hope, Pleasure
 ‘ and Satisfaction arises only, or chiefly
 ‘ from these Evidences of Interest ; but
 ‘ from the Glory, Perfection, and Freeness
 ‘ of Divine Grace appearing in a revealed
 ‘ Christ. For it is this which He has all
 ‘ along in his Eye for his Hope and De-
 ‘ pendance, while he advances forward in

† Gal. ii. 16.

‘ bringing

‘ bringing forth such Fruits of Faith as
 ‘ shew him to be a Disciple of Christ ||.’

You have given us the different Experiences of a Person *before* and *after* his having your View of the Gospel. But I cannot congratulate him on the Change of his Sentiments. For his last State seems to me much worse, that is, much more dangerous than the former.

You observe that ‘ *before* he thought
 ‘ that there was a Necessity for him to find
 ‘ some saving Change, or good Disposition
 ‘ wrought in him, before he could have
 ‘ any Peace in his Conscience, or rest to
 ‘ his Soul, from the perfect Work of
 ‘ Christ presented in the Gospel. But that
 ‘ *now* he finds relief to his Conscience, not
 ‘ by discerning any favourable Symptom
 ‘ about himself, but by understanding that
 ‘ the Blood of Christ is all-sufficient and
 ‘ free, according to the Divine Testi-
 ‘ mony *.’

But is not the Necessity of a saving Change, or a good Disposition evidently taught us in such Passages as these? If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature; old Things are past away, behold all Things are become new †. Know ye not that the

Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God †. This ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person, nor covetous Man who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no Man deceive you with vain Words, for because of these Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience ||. And such Children we are, unless there be a saving Change, or a good Disposition wrought in us.

Well then may He be distressed in his Thoughts who cannot perceive this Change in himself; and well may he seek after it and pray for it †; nor, indeed, as that which will justify and save him; but as that without which there is no being justified and saved, through the Redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

To teach otherwise is to contradict the plain Doctrine of the Apostle, who assures us that they who are only Hearers of the Law, are not just before God; but that the Doers of the Law shall be justified*; and that of our blessed Saviour, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth

† 1 Cor. vi. 10, 11. || Eph. v. 5, 6. † Page 79.
* Rom. ii. 13.

the Will of my Father, which is in Heaven §.

The Temper and Carriage of the Person you speak of, as not having your View of the Gospel, is agreeable to these Doctrines. But it looks as if *he* did not, in the least, regard them, who ‘ finds Relief to his Conscience, Rest to his Soul, by understanding that the Blood of Christ is all-sufficient and free, while he cannot discern any saving Change in himself*,’ or, ‘ some Distinction for the better between himself and another †.’

The perfect Work of Christ without us is not all that is necessary ; no, there must also be the Work of his Spirit, an holy Principle wrought in us. For we must be sanctified by the Spirit of our God ; and of Unrighteous made Righteous, as well as justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, or we cannot inherit the heavenly Kingdom ‡. All whom Christ saves are his People ; his willing People. He has their Hearts. They not only believe in him, but Love him in Sincerity ||. He gave himself for them, to purify unto himself a peculiar People ††, zealous of good

§ Mat. vii. 21, &c. * Page 79. † Page 29.
 ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. || 1 Cor. xvi. 22.
 †† Tit. ii. 13.

Works; and he saves them from their Sins*. He blesses them in turning away every one of them from their Iniquities†.

And from these plain Truths of the Gospel it evidently follows that, as we may with Reason be distressed in our Thoughts for want of perceiving a saving Change, or a good Disposition wrought in us, so the apprehending that we have obtained it may well give us Pleasure, Comfort and Joy. We are indeed to be looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life, and not to what we find in ourselves; but we may reasonably consider this Change as an Evidence of our being true Believers, Christ's Disciples indeed, and consequently, as an Argument that our Hope in Him is not vain and groundless.

‘ You cannot in Conscience,’ you say, ‘ give Indulgence, in the Course of your Preaching, to the Comfort and Pleasure some take from the Contemplation of an inward Work, an holy Principle wrought in them, separate from a direct View of Christ, known and believed §? ’ And if by this you mean no more than that you cannot in Conscience take off their Thoughts, and Hopes, and Comfort and Pleasure, from

* Mat. i. 21. † Acts iii. 26. § Page 20.

Christ,

Christ, and fix them upon that which is wrought in them, I have nothing to object: But if this inward Work be considered, as your Friend expresses it, ‘not as adding
 ‘any thing to the Ground of their Hope,
 ‘but only as evidential of their personal Interest *in*, and vital Union with Christ, as
 ‘the Lord their Righteousness, Hope, and
 ‘Strength ‡,’ I see not why you should scruple to call on those who find it in themselves, even to rejoice and be exceeding glad.

You observe that ‘he who seeth the
 ‘Truth, rejoices in Christ *alone*, having
 ‘no Confidence in the Flesh, Phil. iii. 3*.’ But the Word *alone* is your Addition to the Text, and contrary to the Apostle’s Experience, who speaks of this also as his rejoicing, the Testimony of his Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, he had his Conversation in the World. He rejoiced in Christ as the Author of eternal Salvation, and in this Testimony as an Evidence of his having believed on him to the saving of his Soul; but they must necessarily be Strangers to this joy, who know not what to make of their Conver-

‡ Page 18.

* Page 79.

sation, whether it be in Hypocrisy, or godly Sincerity, after the Flesh, or after the Spirit.

That Doctrine which is pacifying to some may be terrifying to others. As for instance, because the Lord reigneth his Servants should rejoice †, and his Enemies tremble. And thus it is as to the Knowledge of Christ, as revealed in the Gospel. It may well have these different, nay contrary Effects upon Men, according as their Experiences are. It may give Peace and Comfort to those, who find Reason to conclude, that they are Christ's Disciples indeed, and yet strike Terror into those, who are saying in their Hearts, ' We will not have him ' to reign over us.'

We commonly speak of Christ as a Saviour, and it may indeed be said, that whatever our Experiences are, there is nothing terrifying in this Notion of him; but then it may also be said, that it cannot give us Peace in our Consciences, and fill us with Joy, unless we begin to experience the Work of his Grace in our Souls, making us his obedient Servants. For that he might be our Saviour he gave himself for us, not only that we might have Redemp-

† Psalm xlvii. 1. xcix. 1.

tion through his Blood the Forgiveness of Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace ; but that he might also purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, and he is the Saviour of such only as obey him.

But Christ is spoken of in Scripture as the *Judge*, as well as Saviour of Men ; and we are assured that we must all appear before his Judgment Seat, that every one may receive the Things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad *. And as this Notion of Christ, mixed with Faith, leads some to rejoice in the Lord, with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, so it leads others, like *Felix*, to tremble at the hearing of it.

Your Observation is very just, ‘ That
 ‘ a terrifying Apprehension of Guilt and
 ‘ Peace of Conscience are certainly such
 ‘ contraries, that they cannot exist in the
 ‘ same Soul, at the same Time, but in
 ‘ Proportion as the one prevails, the other
 ‘ subsides †.’ And agreeably to this, we may say, that as the Knowledge of Christ, the great *Judge* of all the World, cannot reasonably terrify those, who finding, by Experience, that they so believe in him as to

* 2 Cor. v. 10. † P. 53.

love and obey him, see Reason to rejoice in Hopes that, in the Day of Judgment, the *Saviour* will say to them, ‘ Come ye
 ‘ blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World * ;’ so the Knowledge of Christ the *Saviour* cannot reasonably pacify the Consciences of those, who finding by experience that they are among the Despisers and Rejecters of Christ, see Reason to fear that the *Judge* will pass this dreadful Sentence upon them, ‘ Depart
 ‘ from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire,
 ‘ prepared for the Devil and his Angels †.’

You make a Supposition, that ‘ a Sinner
 ‘ is perplexed, by attending to such solemn
 ‘ Passages as these, He that believes not
 ‘ shall be damned, Mat. xvi. 16. Except
 ‘ ye repent ye shall all likewise perish,
 ‘ Luk. xiii. 3. Except a Man be born
 ‘ again he cannot see the Kingdom of God,
 ‘ Joh. iii. 3. Without Holiness no Man
 ‘ shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14.’ And
 you add ‘ from hence he *naturally* gathers
 ‘ that he can have no Peace to his Conscience, unless he finds Reason to conclude,
 ‘ that he is a Believer, a Penitent, a renewed Man, and one sanctified by the Spirit ‡.’

* Mat. xxv. 34. † Ver. 41. ‡ P. 52.

The Word *naturally* is printed in a different Character, that the more Notice may be taken of it; it may be with a Design, to lead your Readers to look on *him* as a *natural Man*, to whom the Things of the Spirit are Foolishness *, who makes such an Inference from those Passages; for agreeably to this you add, ‘What a surprising Relief must it be to his Mind, which is thus perplexed for want of something, in himself, to afford him Peace, to be struck with the Evidence which the Gospel affords for the immediate Freeness of the Grace revealed by Christ; he now finds Peace coming into his Conscience from thence, directly in a way of Believing †.’

You justly observe, that ‘an awakened Conscience cannot be truly pacified, but by a real Persuasion of the Freeness of Divine Grace ‡.’ But may it not also be observed, that the solemn Passages you have quoted do evidently shew, that *his* Conscience cannot be truly pacified by this Persuasion, who finds nothing in himself to satisfy him, that he is a true Believer, and consequently a Penitent, renewed and sanctified.

I agree with you that we are not to seek after something in ourselves to afford us

* 2 Cor. ii. 14. † P. 52. ‡ P. 53.

Peace, or from whence to derive it, instead of receiving it purely from the perfect Work of Christ, and the Freeness of his Grace. But surely we should be concerned to have, and find, that in ourselves, which may satisfy us that we are among the happy Persons, to whom God in his Word speaketh Peace; that is, not among his Enemies but Servants; not Wicked but Righteous.

The Gospel is certainly very proper to give Relief to even the Chief of Sinners, the vilest Miscreants, who are awakened to a Sense of their Sins, and in great fear of everlasting Punishment. For it sets an all-sufficient Saviour before them, and commands, invites and encourages, every individual Person among them, to look unto him that he may be saved.

But what Reason can any one have for thinking, that the Gospel will afford him any Relief, or do any Thing to pacify his Conscience, unless he believes it, when the Saviour himself has declared, that he that believeth not shall be damned? And indeed it is not easy to conceive that one, who does not believe, should 'find Peace coming into his Conscience directly in a way of Believing.'

But let us suppose, that a Person does, in some Sense, believe the Gospel, that is,
that

that he looks upon it as the Word of God, and makes no Question of its Truth; will this give him that Peace of Conscience which this Doctrine of our Salvation is proper to give? I may confidently answer, No, it will not, unless he has Repentance as well as Faith; or in other Words, unless his Faith works so effectually in him as to produce Repentance. And he cannot be assured that his Faith is true and genuine, justifying and saving, before he finds that Repentance is the Fruit of it. For remember the Saviour has said, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'

Let us also suppose, that we have a Faith, which, not working by Love, does not purify the Heart, and that we have a Repentance which is not the Conversion of the Soul; and that, notwithstanding our Faith and Repentance, it cannot be said, that we are renewed and sanctified, what Reason can we have to speak Peace to ourselves, when the Saviour has declared, that they only, who are born again, can see the Kingdom of God; and when his great Apostle has assured us, that without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord? And do they not, in this, speak agreeably to that Doctrine which, as has been already observed, you yourself have taught us? viz.

E 3

That

That no Faith truly justifies, but that which sanctifies.

If, as you say, 'Evangelical Peace and Rest becomes the Root and Spring of all that Love and Obedience, which distinguishes a Believer from others*,' how can any Person see Reason to conclude that he is a Believer, and that his Peace and Rest is Evangelical, who can find nothing of this Love and Obedience? And yet you speak of *his* obtaining it, by understanding that the Blood of Christ is all-sufficient and free, who cannot discern one favourable Symptom about himself.

A Person in these Circumstances may have the Peace, the Comfort, the Joy, that arises from a firm Belief of this, that he is commanded, invited, encouraged to look unto Christ, for all the Blessings he needs, and to receive him as a free and all-sufficient Saviour: But he cannot have that Peace, that Comfort, and Joy, that springs from a Sense of this, that all those Blessings are actually his, unless he can say that he has received him, and finds in himself that Love and Obedience which distinguishes the Believer from others.

To prevent our deceiving ourselves in a Matter of this Importance, and to keep us

* P. 79.

from

from dreaming that we see Visions of Peace for ourselves, when there is no Peace, but Destruction and Misery are in our Ways, the Scripture frequently gives us the Character of those whom it speaks of as blessed. For instance, it assures us that he, whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered, the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity, is one in whose Spirit there is no Guile †: He is an Israelite indeed, upright before God, his sincere Servant: And it observes concerning him who is in Christ Jesus, and to whom there is no Condemnation, that he walks not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit ‡. In vain therefore do they pacify their Consciences, and please themselves with the Thoughts of being thus blessed, who find no reason to think that they come under these Characters.

We may know and be persuaded that there is free Forgiveness with God, that he may be feared, and yet have no Evidence of this, that through the Riches of his Grace, our Sins are actually forgiven us. And as unless we believe, so unless we repent, are converted and sanctified by the Faith that is in Jesus, it cannot be said that we have any Part, or Lot, in this Privilege. And

† Ps. xxxii. 12. ‡ Rom. viii. 1.

from this it follows, that unless we have some Satisfaction concerning the Reality of our Faith, Repentance, Conversion, and Sanctification, we can have no true Peace in our Consciences.

But please to observe, that I don't say that we must have this Sanctification previously to our looking to Christ for the Forgiveness of our Sins: We are not, as you speak, 'to seek after, to pray and feel for 'some gracious Principle in ourselves, as 'a Sort of Prerequisite to Justification &c.' Believing on Christ that we may be justified by Faith, and not by Works, is that to which we are, in the first Place, to apply. And since Christ is set before us a Prince and Saviour, exalted by the Right-hand of God, to give Repentance to Israel, and the Forgiveness of Sins^{||}, it is very evident that we are to look to him, by Faith, for both these Blessings. But since the Saviour himself has assured us, that except we repent, we must perish; unless satisfied of this our having Repentance, we cannot have the Satisfaction of knowing that our Sins are forgiven us.

I freely grant the whole of that for which you say you contend, viz. 'That there is

‘ such a Truth in the Gospel, as is a sufficient Warrant for a Sinner, as such, immediately to trust in Christ for his own Salvation ¶.’ This is too plain to be disputed. For as it is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save even the chief of Sinners *; and he is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by him †; so all are invited and encouraged to look unto him, that they may be saved ‡; and he himself has assured us, that him that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out §.’

But you are suspicious, that in granting this ‘ there may be some latent Reserve or ‘ Mistake.’ For you add, ‘ Perhaps after ‘ all this Acknowledgment, it may still be ‘ supposed, that the Sinner, in order to have ‘ a satisfying Hope towards God, through ‘ the Freeness of Grace revealed, must first ‘ prove himself to be sufficiently and truly ‘ convinced.’

But whether the Sinner’s Conviction respects his own Sin and Misery, or the All-sufficiency of the Saviour, or the Freeness of his Grace, or any thing else, if it be the

¶ Page 51. * 1 Tim. i. 15. † Heb. vii. 25.
‡ If. xlv. 22. § John vi. 37.

Means of engaging him to receive Christ, and trust in him for his Salvation, it may well be thought to be sufficient.

You justly observe, that ‘the gracious
 ‘ Exhortations and Promises of the Word,
*believe and live; look and be saved; come and
 find rest*; have a most encouraging and Soul-
 pacifying meaning, and plainly suggest to
 ‘ an enlightened Understanding a refreshing
 ‘ Hint:’ But it does not follow from this,
 that *he* does not apprehend their true Mean-
 ing, who is *perplexed* about these *Acts*, or,
 as you speak in another Place, ‘ concerned
 ‘ to know whether he has a right Sort of
 ‘ Faith, or performs the great Work of be-
 ‘ lieving in a right manner, as previously
 ‘ necessary to his Peace ¶.’

We are not indeed ‘ to seek Relief from
 ‘ the apprehending ourselves to be Believers,
 ‘ or from any thing wrought in us, or done
 ‘ by us, but from that which we believe,
 ‘ the Truth of God, the perfect Work of
 ‘ Christ proclaimed in the free Gospel†.’ To
 trust in ourselves, our Faith, or our Holiness,
 is inconsistent with trusting in Christ.

But it is very evident from the Word of
 Truth, and we should not fail to observe it,
 that notwithstanding all that Christ has

¶ Page 71.

¶ Ibid. 82.

† Ibid. 83.

done,

done, and the exceeding Riches of the Grace of God in his Kindness towards us through him, as he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life, but the Wrath of God abideth of him*, so without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord†. And from this it necessarily follows, that it cannot be said that *He* so believeth on Christ as to have Life through his Name, who is not sanctified by the Faith that is in him.

It must therefore be very proper for every one, who is concerned for his Salvation, 'to pray for the Spirit, and for a Work of Grace in the Heart, that he may feel it in himself, and through that Medium have Peace in his Conscience, and sensible Enjoyment of the Divine Favour;' and not only to pray, but to resolve, and heartily endeavour to put away the Evil of his Doings from before the Eyes of the Lord, to cease to do evil, and learn to do well.

But to this you object, that 'all Prayers, Resolutions and Endeavours, previous to having Peace with God, through Faith in the Blood of Christ, are only aimed at the doing, or feeling something from whence to derive Peace, instead of re-

* John iii. 36. † Heb. xii. 14.

'ceiving

‘ceiving it purely from the Freeness of
 ‘Divine Grace.’ And to shew that they,
 who are found in these Duties, seek Right-
 teousness not by Faith, but as it were by
 the Works of the Law, you refer to Rom.
 ix. 32†.

You say, that ‘they who know your
 ‘general Character and Principles, will not
 ‘easily credit the Charges frequently al-
 ‘leged against your Doctrine, viz. that
 ‘it is *Antinomian* ;’ and this, it seems, is
 one of these Charges, that ‘it sets aside
 ‘the use of Exhortations to Unbelievers‡.’
 But to what will you exhort them, if not
 to pray for the Spirit, and for a Work of
 Grace in their Hearts, and to Resolutions
 and Endeavours suitable to their Prayers ?
 And yet how can you exhort them to these
 Things, if you look on their being found
 in them as a slighting the Grace of God, and
 a seeking Righteousness by the Works of
 the Law ?

But although it may be said, that they
 seek Righteousness not by Faith, but, as it
 were, by the Works of the Law, to whom
 Christ is as a stumbling Stone and a Rock
 of Offence, and who are ignorant of God’s
 Righteousness, that Method for the Justifi-

† Page 80.

‡ Page 2.

cation of Sinners which he has established, yet there is no Reason to censure those as acting after this manner, who know and believe, that the Scripture hath concluded all under Sin, and that a Man is not justified by the Deeds of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, and who agreeably to this are praying, in his Name, for his Spirit.

And it is certain that whatever our Knowledge and Belief of the Truth may be, and how much soever our Consciences may be pacified thereby, if we have not the Spirit of Christ we are none of his*; and all our Hopes of everlasting Life are vain and groundless, unless, through the Workings of his Spirit, being made free from Sin, we become Servants to God, and have our Fruit unto Holiness†. For he who hath a well-grounded Hope, purifieth himself even as he is pure‡.

• Upon the whole then, I must conclude, that (as you say) a right Notion
 ‘ and real Belief of the Truth, that is,
 ‘ such a Notion and such a Belief of it
 ‘ as is justifying and saving, will be (nay is §)

* Rom. viii. 9. † Chap. vi. 22. ‡ John iii. 3.

§ See Friendly Conferences, page 47, 48, 49.

‘ productive of spiritual and saving Fruits ||;’
 as for instance, ‘ That Love and Obedi-
 ‘ ence, which distinguishes a Believer from
 ‘ others †. And from this it follows, that
 ‘ they, in whom none of these Fruits can
 ‘ be found, deceive themselves in thinking
 ‘ that, being justified by Faith, they have
 ‘ Peace with God through Jesus Christ our
 ‘ Lord.’

I join with you in lamenting the Case of
 those who, not ‘ having the Knowledge of
 ‘ Christ, and his complete Redemption, as
 ‘ appearing in the Gospel, for their only
 ‘ Hope, Righteousness, and Strength,’ think
 to be justified by their own Works, ‘ and
 ‘ know no other Peace of Conscience than
 ‘ what they derive from a Reflection upon
 ‘ their Experiences and Evidences *.’

But then I look on their Condition as no
 better, ‘ who believe and love the Doctrine
 ‘ of Free Redemption, and receive Satisfac-
 ‘ tion only, and immediately from thence §,’
 although they have no Experience of a Work
 of Grace in their Souls, shewing itself in a
 corresponding Gospel Conduct; and who
 are not constrained, by their Knowledge and
 their Faith, to love and obey the Lord Jesus,
 as well as to trust and hope in him.

I own that there is a 'Knowledge of Christ,
 ' which is properly the Principle of Grace ;'
 and that it may very well be said that ' the
 ' Believer is not possessed of any Principle
 ' previous to it ; and that it is the Spring
 ' of all he is as a Christian, by which he is
 ' led to live continually upon something
 ' without, not taking his Encouragement
 ' or Hope from any Thing within himself,
 ' but from the Consideration of what he
 ' sees in Christ, and the Gospel of Free
 ' Grace, and that this Knowledge of Christ
 ' is sufficient for Comfort and Holiness*.'

But it ought to be observed, that we
 cannot thus speak of that which you call
 the *pure*, or *meer* Knowledge of Christ :
 No, but of that Knowledge of him, which,
 as you say, ' is given to the Soul by the
 ' Spirit†,' and which is not alone, but ac-
 companied with other Graces ; particularly
 Faith, a Faith that is the Operation and
 Gift of God, which working by Love pu-
 rifies the Heart. For unless that which we
 know be mixed with Faith, it cannot
 profit us.

And as to both the Knowledge and the
 Faith of Christ, it may justly be said, that
 unless we find by Experience, that being at-

* Page 3, 4, 5. † Page 5.

tended by other Graces, they are sufficient and effectual for Holiness, we ought not to think that they are sufficient and effectual for Peace and Comfort. For as the Apostle speaks, Though I have all Knowledge, and though I have all Faith, and have not Charity, true Love to God and my Neighbour, I am nothing, it profiteth me nothing*.

There is the more Reason to take Notice of this, because presumptuous Hopes in Christ are so common and so fatal. For many we may meet with, the shew of whose Countenance doth Witness against them, they declare their Sin as Sodom, they hide it not, and yet having that 'assurance of Faith, which arises from the Evidence carried in the Divine Testimony to the Consciences of the *Ungodly*†,' or being fully persuaded that Christ came to save Sinners, they Hope in him for Salvation, and so dwell careless, quiet and secure, free from all Fear of the Divine Threatenings.

But to encourage the Hopes of such Persons, what is it but to strengthen their Hands, that they should not return from their Wickedness? And surely we may keep at a Distance from every Thing that

* 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3. † Page 54.

has such a Tendency, and yet give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name, for the exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindness towards us through Jesus Christ; and thankfully acknowledge, that it is not by Works of Righteousness which we do, but according to his Mercy that he saveth us.

To know that we are passed from Death to Life, 'is it not (says the late truly reverend and pious Mr. Hervey) a most desirable Knowledge? On the other Hand, 'can any Thing be more afflicting, than 'a State of Suspense with regard to this all 'important Affair? To be in suspense 'whether my final Lot will fall, in the 'Regions of endless Misery, or the Mansions of eternal Glory?—Insupportable*.'

And yet a Case may be supposed that is infinitely more to be dreaded than this, and it is, in fact, the Case of those who live and die in full Hopes of Heaven, but have great Reason for the Fears of being cast down to Hell; and who, should they cry to the Saviour with the greatest Confidence, 'Lord, Lord, open to us,' shall receive for Answer, 'Verily I say unto you, I never 'knew you: depart from me, ye that 'work Iniquity.'

* Letters, Vol. ii. xxix.

What Diligence then should every one shew, that he may have the *full Assurance* of Hope, and keep it to the End of his Course? That *Assurance* to which the *Un-godly*, notwithstanding their Belief of the Gospel, are necessarily Strangers; for, as you have well observed, it 'arises from 'Experience in the Hearts of them that 'love God, and keep his Command-
'ments*.'

You say, that you 'have always asserted 'and maintained, that inward Experiences, 'followed by corresponding Gospel Con-
'duct, are the only Things that can evi-
'dence a personal Interest in Christ, and
'that so far as these appear to be genuine,
'and no farther, we have ground to con-
'clude it concerning ourselves†.' And all that I desire of you is, that you would hold on asserting and maintaining, and never contradict, that which you have always asserted and maintained.

But I cannot help thinking that a Man may have that Faith which is nothing else but a Belief of the Truth, who worketh not but only believeth‡; and that there may be a Conviction of this, that the whole Work of Christ is freely presented to Sinners as

* Page 54. † Page 6, 7. ‡ Page 82.

such for their Relief ; and that this Conviction may pacify the Soul, and lead a Person to take his whole Hope purely from thence, and yet not be followed with a corresponding Gospel Conduct *.

I cannot therefore but earnestly beseech you to deal plainly with your Hearers, and let them know, that, if it be thus with any of them, they are in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniquity ; and that as for the Faith or Conviction, with which, it may be, they please themselves, instead of looking on it as *saving*, they should rather consider it as *the Condemnation* †, adding to their Guilt, and rendering them worthy of the forer Punishment.

I shall only add a passage to this purpose, in *Theron* and *Aspasio*, Dialogue XVI. They had fled to a Summer-house for Shelter from an approaching Storm. And upon this *Aspasio* says, ‘ Could this Building, though
 ‘ very substantial, have secured us from the
 ‘ rushing Rains, if we had not betaken ourselves to its friendly Coverts?’ And then he adds as follows:

‘ Christ is represented in the Prophecy of
 ‘ *Isaiah*, by this very Image, as a Place of
 ‘ Refuge, and as a Covert from the Storm and

* Page 82.

† John iii. 19.

‘ from

‘ *from Rain*; that is, his Merits and Death
 ‘ are a sure Protection from the Curse of the
 ‘ Law, and the Damnation of Hell: No
 ‘ Fury of the Elements so terrible as *these*;
 ‘ no Bulwark of Stone so impregnable as
 ‘ *those*. —If this be a proper Emblem of
 ‘ Christ, to what shall we liken Faith? To
 ‘ a Persuasion, that the Shelter of the Sum-
 ‘ mer-house is *free* for our Use? That we
 ‘ are welcome to avail ourselves of the
 ‘ commodious Retreat? Would this defend
 ‘ us from the Inclemency of the Weather?
 ‘ Would this keep us dry, amidst the de-
 ‘ scending Deluge? Would this bare Per-
 ‘ suasion, unless reduced to Practice, be any
 ‘ manner of Advantage to our Persons?—
 ‘ No, surely; we must actually fly to the
 ‘ Shelter; and we must actually apply to
 ‘ the Saviour; otherwise I see not what
 ‘ Comfort or Benefit can be derived from
 ‘ either.’



I am,

Yours, &c.

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